

God Centered Solutions to Man Centered Problems, Part 3 - Romans 3:25-26 – August 28th, 2011

- Today's teaching is part three in a series titled; "God Centered Solutions to Man Centered Problems."
- Throughout this third chapter of Romans, and really leading up to this third chapter, the Apostle Paul has been re-shifting the Jewish self-focus.
- The way he's been accomplishing this is by re-centering them on the revealed righteousness from God, vis-a-vis the revealed wrath of God.

- Therein lies the problem; all are law breakers, all have all sinned, all fall short of God's glory, so we all deserve condemnation under the law.
- However, if you're self-righteous, and self-centered as these Jews in Rome were, and still fancy yourself as a law keeper, you've got a problem.
- Your problem is you've centered everything around your own righteousness. You have been deceived and believed that you're a good person.

- The question becomes, how is God going to bring about His solution to man's sin problem? There must be a way to resolve this divine dilemma.
- There is a way, and it comes vis-a-vis the one Who said; "I am the way, the truth and the life," and there's no way I can do this, in my own way.
- We saw this first way for the God-centered solution of salvation, to the man-centered problem of condemnation, beginning back in verse 21:

- 1. Come from God apart from the law (Verse 21)**

 - Paul says how that now a righteousness from God apart from the law, testified to by both the Prophets and the law, has now been made known.

- 2. Come through faith to those who believe (Verse 22)**

 - Paul tells them that this righteousness from God, comes through faith, in Jesus Christ, to all who believe. It's not through self-righteousness.

- 3. Come by grace for all have sinned (Verses 23-24)**

 - He says all have sinned falling short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by His grace, through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.

- 4. Come as a substitute in our place (Verses 25-26)**

 - v25 Paul says how Jesus is a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in His blood demonstrating His justice. He left sins beforehand unpunished.
 - v26 We're told that in forbearance He did this to demonstrate His justice so as to be just, and the one Who justifies those having faith in Jesus.
 - In order to get our minds around this, and our hands on this, we must first understand what propitiation, or this sacrifice of atonement means.

 - I realize that some may still be trying to come to terms, with terms, like; justification, redemption, reconciliation, atonement, and now propitiation.
 - Perhaps you'll indulge me for just a moment, while I try to simplify these terms in the context of what the Apostle Paul is writing in this epistle.
 - Justification means that it's "just-if-I'd" never sinned. Redemption is the price that was paid to redeem the debtor that's sold at the slave market.

 - Reconciliation means that we are now reunited to God, because of the atonement, which means that we are now "at-one-ment" with God.
 - The only way there can be this justification, redemption, reconciliation, and atonement, is by means of the propitiation with a substitute sacrifice.
 - There is no remission of sin without the shedding of blood, and Jesus became our substitute as the sacrifice. His blood was shed, in our stead.

I like how one commentator explained it: "Redemption is an act of God by which He Himself pays as a ransom, the price of human sin which the outraged holiness and government of God requires. Redemption undertakes the solution of the problem of sin, as reconciliation undertakes the solution of the problem of the sinner, and propitiation undertakes the problem of an offended God."

 - This is why there's now no condemnation to those that are in Christ Jesus. The wrath of God has now been appeased vis-a-vis this propitiation.
 - Only the shed blood of Jesus Christ, in His once and for all substitutionary sacrifice has the power to satisfy God's wrath for the sins of mankind.
 - If the law is powerless to save me, and it is, then so too is any sacrifice I make powerless to appease God's wrath for breaking the law of God.

 - Question; if that's how the problem of God's wrath is resolved eternally, then shouldn't that be how problems are resolved in this life temporally?
 - We now have a template of sorts for the solution to the divine dilemma. It comes from God by grace through faith in the substitutionary sacrifice.
 - It would stand to reason, that we can use this template in our approach to the problems of this life, if it can solve the problem of our eternal life.

 - Here's what I'm thinking; "shouldn't God centered solutions to my man centered problems come from Him by grace through faith in His blood?"
 - By way of illustration, let's try using this template on a common man centered problem, by attempting to solve a problem in the area of marriage.
 - For purpose of discussion, we won't define the problem, we'll just say that this couple has been experiencing a problem that they cannot solve.

 - Here-to-fore, the problem has actually gotten even worse because everything they've tried to do in an attempt to resolve it is met with failure.
 - The husband blames the wife, and the wife blames the husband. The husband argues that it's her problem, the wife argues that it's his problem.
 - The husband wants something from the wife, and the wife wants something from the husband. Trying to get what they want just never works.

 - They start losing hope in the marriage, and they begin to lose faith in each other. Then, it gets so bad that they start looking for a substitute.
 - Some turn to drugs and alcohol, some turn to their career, and worse yet, others turn to another person to get from them what they haven't had.
 - At this point, the fate of this marriage has been sealed. It's doomed to fail and will end in divorce only to be repeated remarrying someone else.

 - I'm keenly aware, I've painted a very bleak picture of a very bad marriage however, that's precisely the man centered problem we can resolve.
 - How? By now placing our template of the God centered solution onto this man centered problem. Let's see how this should play out instead.
 - First, the reason this couple has been powerless to save their marriage, is the same reason that the law is powerless to save us as sinners.

 - Just as the law shows us that we are sinners, so too does the problem in this couple's marriage show them that they too are both sinners.
 - They are both at fault, thus they are both to blame. This will explain why the solution comes not from them but from God, and apart from the law.
 - This is why nothing they try, works. It's not of works, it's all of grace, and it comes by grace from God. They don't deserve it, they receive it.

 - The reason this couple is losing faith in each other not getting what they needed from the other is that it comes through faith in God, not them.
 - This presupposes that they're taking their needs to the Lord, Who is always faithful and from Whom there's no greater love that never fails.
 - By taking their needs to the Lord, they're acknowledging the substitutionary sacrifice of the Lord, and the blood shed in their stead by the Lord.

 - Here's how it works; there's so much power in the blood of Jesus Christ that when I realize that I've been forgiven of much, I'll in turn love much.
 - No longer will I tie the hands of God's solutions with the ropes of my self justified righteousness, and in so doing make my problems even worse.
 - God has permission to have the solution come from Him, by grace, through faith, in His substitutionary sacrifice with His blood shed in my stead.